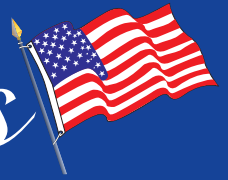




Congressman Mark Kirk's

10th District News



Tenth Congressional District

July 2009

Super-Marijuana "Kush" Hits Suburbs

Congressman Kirk joined with local law enforcement to unveil tougher penalties for a new type of "super-marijuana" hitting the northern suburbs. "Kush," street slang for a strain of highly-potent marijuana, has a THC content of at least 20 percent and makes its users "zombie-like."

"Parents need to be aware of this new, potent form of marijuana. Drug dealers know they can make as much money selling Kush as cocaine but without the heavier sentences that accompany crack and cocaine trafficking. While higher fines and longer sentences aren't the solution to our nation's drug problem; if you can make as much money selling pot as cocaine, you should face the same penalties," said Congressman Kirk when introducing the *High-Potency Marijuana Sentencing Enhancement Act of 2009* (H.R. 2828). The legislation increases federal fines and sentences for the distribution of high-potency marijuana, targeting drug trafficking only and not possession.



Rep. Kirk proposes tougher penalties for super pot

"Dealers told (police) they were going into Kush because of the light sentences," Kirk said. Kirk talked about the drug and his legislative remedy at a news conference in Chicago and in an interview afterward. He was accompanied by Waukegan police Chief Artis Yancey and representatives from the Lake County sheriff's office and Lake County Metropolitan Enforcement Group.

Daily Herald — June 16, 2009

Ban "Pay-to-Play" in Washington and Springfield

Kirk backs legislation to bar political contributions from recipients of federal earmarks



Following the removal of Governor Blagojevich, Congressman Kirk and Illinois State Sen. Matt Murphy announced parallel efforts in the U.S. Congress and the Illinois State Senate to end "pay-to-play" fundraising in Washington and Springfield.

Kirk co-sponsored H.Res.85 that would ban political contributions from organizations receiving federal earmarks from the sponsoring member of Congress. "We should ban the possibility of a quid-pro-quo in our elected officials," he said. The Flake-Kirk bill would prevent members of Congress from proposing earmarks for any organization they had received contributions from, including lobbyists, employees or political action committees affiliated with that company, union or group.

Rep. Kirk proposes legislation targeting pay-to-play politics

New legislation is being introduced, aimed at ending "pay-to-play" politics in Springfield and Washington. Congressman Mark Kirk and State Senator Matt Murphy today outlined details of their plan, which is being introduced in Congress and the Illinois General Assembly. **WGN-TV** — February 2, 2009

THE DISTRICT REVIEW

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE 10TH DISTRICT

“Top 10 Most Wanted Gang Members”

Congressman Kirk and local law enforcement announced the second annual Top 10 Most Wanted Gang Members of Lake County. A total of 17 gang members have been apprehended following their addition to the Top 10 list — three gang leaders were arrested within the four days after the first announcement last year.

“Illinois leads the nation in per capita gang members, fueled in part by the growth of suburban street gangs,” said Congressman Kirk, who established the Top 10 List with the Lake County Sheriff’s office and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. “As violent gangs are pushed out of Chicago, they are relocating to the northern suburbs.”



U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk joined ATF Special Agent in Charge Andy Traver for a news conference to showcase the latest “Top Ten Most Wanted” gang members list.

Daily Herald

Officials unveil Lake County’s most-wanted gang members

...U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk joined Curran for a news conference at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms headquarters in Chicago to showcase the latest “Top Ten Most Wanted” gang members list. “Gangs are responsible for all of the drug dealing and most of the violence in Lake County,” Curran said. “They have basically declared war on society, and we are declaring war on them.”

February 10, 2009

Suburban Heroin Deaths Rising

At least 20 Lake County residents have died from high-purity heroin this year — more than double the usual number of deaths from overdoses. And in Will County, 11 have died in 2009, three short of the total number of 2008 overdose deaths.

“We have seen a sharp increase in the number of fatal heroin overdoses in the suburbs,” said Kirk. “We cannot stop the flow of illegal drugs without targeting the high-powered weapons that flow south to Mexico.” The congressman unveiled the *Border Reinforcement and Violence Reduction Act* to provide additional resources to the ATF and local law enforcement agencies to crack down on the trafficking of these weapons, reduce drug cartel power, and limit their ability to bring heroin into the United States.

Kirk Receives Environmental Award



Republicans for Environmental Protection (REP) announced its 2008 congressional scorecard and presented Congressman Kirk with its “Greenest Republican in Congress” award. The congressman received a perfect score from REP for votes in support of the Great Lakes, green building requirements, renewable energy, public transportation and open lands preservation. REP President Rob Sisson presented the award at the Shedd Aquarium.

Kirk links suburban deaths to Mexican drug trade

An increase in suburban Chicago heroin overdose deaths is linked to gangs’ illegal drug and arms trade with Mexican cartels, U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk said Thursday. Three Mexican cartels operate through gangs in the Chicago area, and authorities cannot stop the flow of drugs to the region without targeting the groups’ arms, Kirk said. “You are fighting gangs who have far more resources, more soldiers and more guns than Al Capone ever dreamed of.”

Associated Press — April 16, 2009

Kirk: We must Secure our Nation's Food Supply

In the wake of deadly salmonella outbreaks from contaminated peanut butter and tainted food imports from China, Congressman Kirk joined with Congressman Peter Roskam to reintroduce the Keeping America's Food Safe Act. The legislation will increase oversight and close deadly Food and Drug Administration (FDA) loopholes. While it is illegal to ship contaminated products, suppliers and labs are not required to submit data on failed tests. In the case of Peanut Corporation of America, the source of the salmonella contamination that resulted in the recall of 2,500 products, they found contamination on 12 occasions but continued to sell their products after shopping around for a favorable test result.

"Parents have a right to purchase safe food for their children."

Congressman Mark Kirk

The NewsSun

Kirk bill would increase food testing rules

On the heels of contaminated peanut butter causing a nationwide salmonella outbreak, U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk is reintroducing legislation to tighten Food and Drug Administration testing oversight. Kirk is joining with U.S. Rep. Peter Roskam, R-Wood Dale, in sponsoring the Keeping America's Food Safe Act. It would require all test results that show a potential contamination to be reported to the FDA for evaluation under the agency's Reportable Food Registry and allow the agency to initiate mandated recalls of food products.

February 24, 2009

ISSUE UPDATE

Kirk to EPA: Investigate BP's Record of Pollution

Following revelations that British Petroleum's (BP) oil refining facility in Whiting, Ind., has violated clean air standards for nearly six years, Congressmen Kirk and Mike Quigley (D-IL) asked the U.S. EPA administrator to review all BP pollution discharges in the Great Lakes basin. BP confirmed they had exceeded Clean Air Act limits on the release of benzene, a dangerous toxin linked to leukemia and other serious medical conditions.

"Two years ago, we scored a major victory after BP agreed to back down from its plan to dump more ammonia and industrial sludge into Lake Michigan," said Kirk. "Recent revelations underscore that BP cannot be trusted to meet federal clean air and water requirements and must be monitored closely."

Chicago Public Radio.

Kirk wants EPA to monitor BP

Mark Kirk is going after his favorite target again: BP. The Republican North Shore Congressman is asking the federal Environmental Protection Agency to review all of BP's emissions at its refinery in Whiting.

June 4, 2009

Congressional Medal of Honor Commemorative Coin Act Passes House



Congressmen Mark Kirk and Chris Carney, Congress' only Navy Reserve intelligence officers, joined together to support the ideals of our nation's highest military honors. *The Congressional Medal of Honor Commemorative Coin Act of 2009* will raise funds for the non-profit Medal of Honor Foundation. Tenth District Medal of Honor recipient Al Lynch joined with the Congressmen in support of this legislation.

Long-Overdue Medals Presented



Congressman Kirk recently presented the family of Robert Estrada of Arlington Heights long-overdue medals for his service in World War II; Estrada passed away in December. The father of seven, he was very proud of his service with the A Company, 117th Infantry Regiment, 30th Infantry Division — named "Old Hickory" after President Andrew Jackson. The 117th cleared the way for General Patton's 3rd Army across Europe, engaging the Germans in the Ardennes, central Europe and Rhineland campaigns as well as the Battle of the Bulge. For his acts of heroism in 1944, Estrada earned, but never received, the Silver Star, Bronze Star and a Purple Heart, among others. Accepting the medals on his behalf were his daughters Kathy Blair, Connie Estrada and Kim Bluver.



I would like to hear your views on legislation being considered in Congress.

To help me represent you better, please tell me whether you approve or disapprove of each of the following proposals:

	Strongly Approve	Somewhat Approve	Somewhat Disapprove	Strongly Disapprove
1. To defend the dollar by borrowing less, should Congress cut federal spending for programs not related to creating jobs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Should Congress raise taxes to fund a new government healthcare plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Should Congress skip secret ballot elections if a union gets 50% of employees to publically sign a petition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Should there be a ban on representatives raising money from entities who received federal earmarks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Do you support a climate change bill that would increase energy costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Do you support the government takeover and loans to General Motors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Do you support allowing banks to refund their government TARP funds early?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. With the rising trillion-dollar deficit, do you favor cancelling some stimulus program funding?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Do you favor closing Guantanamo Bay prison and bringing Al Qaeda terrorists to U.S. prisons?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. To support negotiations to end its nuclear weapons program, do you support a gasoline quarantine policy to increase pressure on Iran?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Do you support President Obama's decision to surge 21,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TO MAIL BACK:

Please cut page along dotted line (left). Fold in half. Place tape at top opening to seal. *Be sure mailing address is showing. Affix postage.*

NEWS BRIEFS

Mayor's Summit

One week after statewide municipal elections, Congressman Kirk joined with mayors and mayors-elect from all over the northern suburbs today at the 10th Congressional District Mayors Summit at the congressman's Northbrook office. They discussed economic development opportunities for suburban communities, including federal funds available for infrastructure improvements and police and fire departments.

Reforms to Boost Economy and Protect Retirement Savings

The congressman joined with small business owners and economic leaders to unveil three critical reforms to help steady financial markets, save family businesses and protect retirement accounts. Kirk called for reinstating the "Uptick

Rule" to stabilize stock volatility and suspend the "Mark-to-Market" accounting rule that triggers banks runs. He also called for passage of the Capital Gains and Estate Tax Relief Act to permanently eliminate the Death Tax to save family-owned small businesses and farms.

Climate Change and Growth Threaten Lake Level

With new reports showing a 30% drop in Lake Michigan ice cover since 1972, Congressman Kirk has proposed legislation that calls on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to conduct long-term ice cover and water level outlooks for the Great Lakes to report on the impact of climate change on the habitats, fish and wildlife, commerce, recreational opportunities and water supply of the Great Lakes basin.

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Congressman Mark Kirk
707 Skokie Boulevard, Suite 350
Northbrook, Illinois 60062-4010

OFFICIAL BUSINESS:

Congressional Survey Enclosed

SPECIAL REPORT

Kirk Introduces Medical Rights and Reform Act

Reforms Health Care Responsibly

After listening sessions and meetings with over 70 patients-rights advocates, doctors, nurses, hospitals and medical groups, Congressmen Kirk and Charlie Dent (R-Penn.), co-chairs of the centrist Tuesday Group, introduced the *Medical Rights and Reform Act*. The legislation will:

- Protect the doctor-patient relationship
- Lower healthcare costs
- Expand health insurance coverage

The Act prevents the government from coming between patients and their doctors. To lower healthcare costs, the bill includes lawsuit reforms to reduce defensive medicine; health information technology to eliminate errors; standards to target waste, fraud and abuse. It also promotes wellness programs. To expand health insurance coverage, the bill increases access by encouraging state-centered insurance markets reforms, enhancing Health Savings Accounts, expanding rural health care programs, and giving low-income families the option to use public funds to purchase private health insurance plans.

"*The Medical Rights and Reform Act* applies common-sense, centrist principles to the health care debate by lowering costs and expanding access without compromising the doctor-patient relationship, jeopardizing the quality of American medicine or raising taxes on the American people," said Kirk.



Kirk discusses health care and other local and national issues during town hall meetings held at the Palatine Township Center (top photo) and the Waukegan Public Library (bottom photo).

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

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ports, please call our
Northbrook office.

Sign up for my e-newsletter and read my blog at
www.house.gov/kirk

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Model Congress of High School Students

Congressman Kirk swore in over 120 area students from 21 10th District high schools for his third annual Model Congress. During an all day session at Stevenson High School, students assumed the roles of actual members of Congress and this year debated economic recovery legislation and ways to boost the economy. They also discussed foreign policy toward Iran.

Kirk welcomes VA Secretary to North Chicago

Congressman Kirk met with VA Secretary Eric Shinseki at the North Chicago VA Hospital — the first joint Navy-VA Hospital in the country. The Secretary toured the facility, met with veterans and shared his thoughts about how to improve veteran health care.



New medical facility to serve military, vets

U.S. Reps. Melissa Bean (D-Barrington) and Mark Kirk (R-Highland Park) introduced legislation Wednesday which ensures that both active duty military and veteran personnel will have access to the new joint medical facilities under construction at the North Chicago Veterans Administration campus.

The
NewsSun

March 5, 2009